

## Employment of young adults

*The percentage of a population group with jobs is influenced by a variety of factors. Some factors influence the willingness of employers to offer jobs to individuals with different levels of education at the going wage rate, while others influence the willingness of these individuals to take jobs at the going wage rate. The higher the proportion of young adults who are employed, the better their labor market opportunities are relative to other things they could do and vice versa.*

- Generally, between 1971 and 1996, the percentage of 25- to 34-year-olds who were employed was higher among those individuals with a higher level of education. In 1996, male and female college graduates aged 25–34 were much more likely to be employed than their counterparts who did not finish high school.
- The gap between the percentage of males and females aged 25–34 who were employed narrowed between 1971 and 1996 within each education group. The change was particularly noteworthy for college graduates, decreasing from 36 percentage points in 1971 to 8 percentage points in 1996, 45 to 11 percentage points for those with some college, 51 to 20 percentage points for those with a high school diploma, and 53 to 29 percentage points for those who did not finish high school.
- In 1996, the percentage of females aged 25–34 who were employed was higher than that in 1971, regardless of their education level. However, the percentage of females with a high school diploma or higher who were employed increased at a faster rate than did the percentage of females with less than a high school diploma.

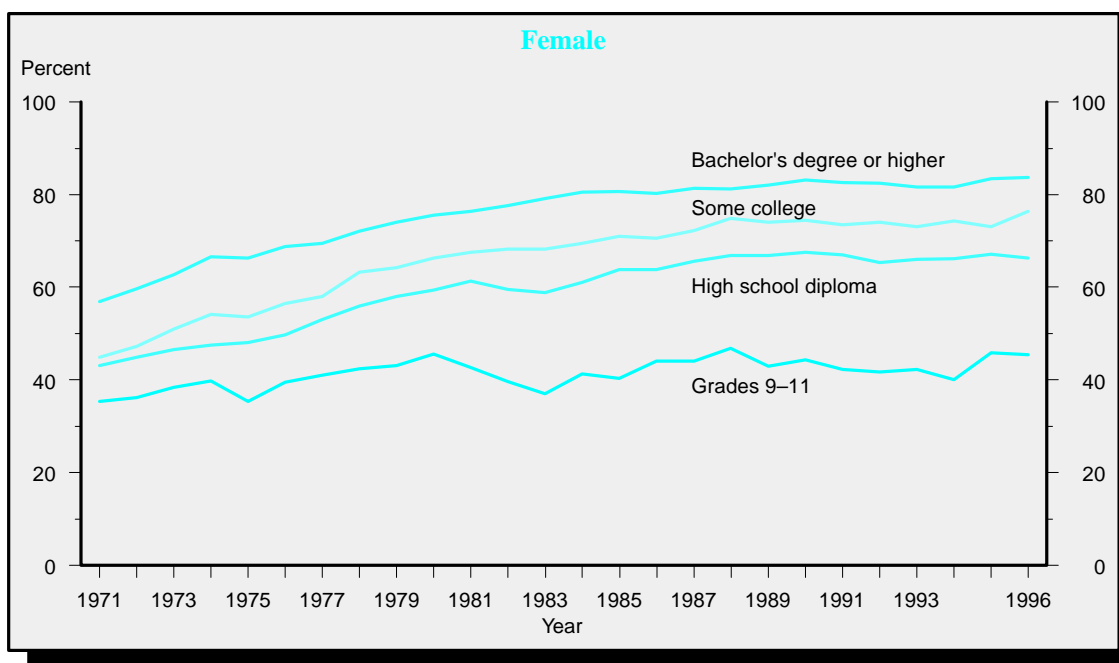
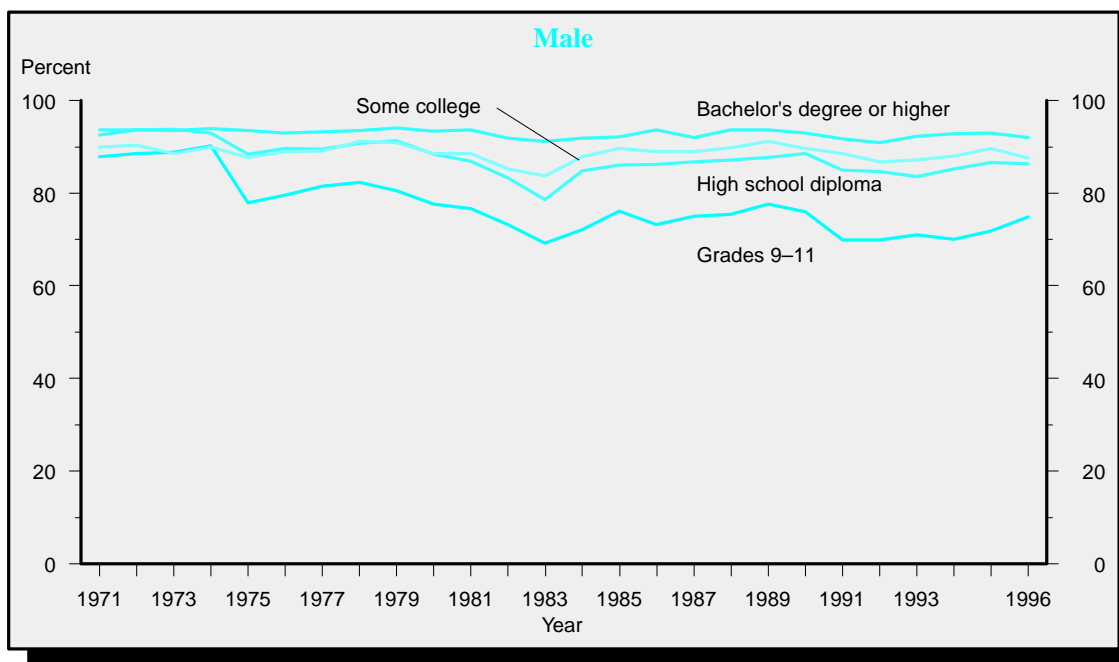
### Percentage of 25- to 34-year-olds who were employed, by sex and years of school completed: Selected years March 1971–96

	Male				Female			
	Grades 9–11	High school diploma	Some college	Bachelor's degree or higher	Grades 9–11	High school diploma	Some college	Bachelor's degree or higher
March 1971	87.9	93.6	89.9	92.5	35.4	43.1	44.9	56.9
1973	88.8	93.8	88.5	93.5	38.4	46.5	51.0	62.7
1975	78.0	88.4	87.7	93.5	35.4	48.1	53.6	66.3
1977	81.5	89.5	89.1	93.3	41.0	53.0	58.0	69.5
1979	80.5	91.3	90.9	94.1	43.2	58.0	64.2	74.0
1981	76.7	86.9	88.5	93.7	42.7	61.3	67.6	76.4
1983	69.3	78.6	83.8	91.1	37.1	58.8	68.3	79.2
1985	76.1	86.1	89.7	92.2	40.3	63.9	71.0	80.6
1987	75.0	86.8	89.0	92.1	44.0	65.6	72.2	81.4
1989	77.6	87.8	91.1	93.7	43.0	66.9	74.0	82.1
1991	69.9	84.9	88.6	91.8	42.3	67.0	73.5	82.6
1992	69.9	84.7	86.7	90.9	41.7	65.4	74.0	82.5
1993	71.0	83.6	87.2	92.3	42.2	66.0	73.0	81.6
1994	70.0	85.2	88.0	92.8	40.1	66.2	74.3	81.6
1995	71.8	86.6	89.6	92.9	45.8	67.2	73.0	83.4
1996	74.9	86.3	87.6	92.1	45.5	66.3	76.4	83.7

NOTE: In 1992, the Current Population Survey (CPS) changed the questions used to obtain the educational attainment of respondents. See the supplemental note to *Indicator 22* for further discussion.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, March Current Population Surveys.

Percentage of 25- to 34-year-olds who were employed,  
by years of school completed: March 1971–96



NOTE: In 1992, the Current Population Survey (CPS) changed the questions used to obtain the educational attainment of respondents. See the supplemental note to *Indicator 22* for further discussion.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, March Current Population Surveys.

**Percentage of 25- to 34-year-olds who were employed, by sex and years of school completed:  
Selected years March 1971–96**

March	Male				Female			
	Grades 9–11	High school diploma	Some college	Bachelor's degree or higher	Grades 9–11	High school diploma	Some college	Bachelor's degree or higher
1971	87.9	93.6	89.9	92.5	35.4	43.1	44.9	56.9
1973	88.8	93.8	88.5	93.5	38.4	46.5	51.0	62.7
1975	78.0	88.4	87.7	93.5	35.4	48.1	53.6	66.3
1977	81.5	89.5	89.1	93.3	41.0	53.0	58.0	69.5
1979	80.5	91.3	90.9	94.1	43.2	58.0	64.2	74.0
1981	76.7	86.9	88.5	93.7	42.7	61.3	67.6	76.4
1983	69.3	78.6	83.8	91.1	37.1	58.8	68.3	79.2
1985	76.1	86.1	89.7	92.2	40.3	63.9	71.0	80.6
1987	75.0	86.8	89.0	92.1	44.0	65.6	72.2	81.4
1989	77.6	87.8	91.1	93.7	43.0	66.9	74.0	82.1
1991	69.9	84.9	88.6	91.8	42.3	67.0	73.5	82.6
1992	69.9	84.7	86.7	90.9	41.7	65.4	74.0	82.5
1993	71.0	83.6	87.2	92.3	42.2	66.0	73.0	81.6
1994	70.0	85.2	88.0	92.8	40.1	66.2	74.3	81.6
1995	71.8	86.6	89.6	92.9	45.8	67.2	73.0	83.4
1996	74.9	86.3	87.6	92.1	45.5	66.3	76.4	83.7

NOTE: In 1992, the Current Population Survey (CPS) changed the questions used to obtain the educational attainment of respondents. See the supplemental note to *Indicator 22* for further discussion.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, March Current Population Surveys.

**Table 32-1 Percentage of 25- to 34-year-olds who were employed, by sex and years of school completed: March 1971-96**

	Male				Female			
	Grades 9-11	High school diploma	Some college	Bachelor's degree or higher	Grades 9-11	High school diploma	Some college	Bachelor's degree or higher
March								
1971	87.9	93.6	89.9	92.5	35.4	43.1	44.9	56.9
1972	88.5	93.7	90.4	93.6	36.2	44.9	47.3	59.7
1973	88.8	93.8	88.5	93.5	38.4	46.5	51.0	62.7
1974	90.2	92.9	89.9	93.9	39.8	47.6	54.2	66.6
1975	78.0	88.4	87.7	93.5	35.4	48.1	53.6	66.3
1976	79.6	89.6	89.0	92.9	39.5	49.8	56.5	68.8
1977	81.5	89.5	89.1	93.3	41.0	53.0	58.0	69.5
1978	82.4	90.8	91.2	93.5	42.4	55.9	63.3	72.1
1979	80.5	91.3	90.9	94.1	43.2	58.0	64.2	74.0
1980	77.7	88.4	88.5	93.4	45.6	59.4	66.3	75.5
1981	76.7	86.9	88.5	93.7	42.7	61.3	67.6	76.4
1982	73.2	83.3	85.2	91.9	39.7	59.6	68.2	77.7
1983	69.3	78.6	83.8	91.1	37.1	58.8	68.3	79.2
1984	72.1	84.8	87.9	91.9	41.3	61.0	69.5	80.5
1985	76.1	86.1	89.7	92.2	40.3	63.9	71.0	80.6
1986	73.3	86.2	89.0	93.7	44.1	63.8	70.6	80.3
1987	75.0	86.8	89.0	92.1	44.0	65.6	72.2	81.4
1988	75.5	87.2	89.8	93.7	46.9	66.8	74.8	81.2
1989	77.6	87.8	91.1	93.7	43.0	66.9	74.0	82.1
1990	76.0	88.6	89.7	93.0	44.4	67.5	74.5	83.2
1991	69.9	84.9	88.6	91.8	42.3	67.0	73.5	82.6
1992	69.9	84.7	86.7	90.9	41.7	65.4	74.0	82.5
1993	71.0	83.6	87.2	92.3	42.2	66.0	73.0	81.6
1994	70.0	85.2	88.0	92.8	40.1	66.2	74.3	81.6
1995	71.8	86.6	89.6	92.9	45.8	67.2	73.0	83.4
1996	74.9	86.3	87.6	92.1	45.5	66.3	76.4	83.7

NOTE: In 1992, the Current Population Survey (CPS) changed the questions used to obtain the educational attainment of respondents. See the supplemental note to *Indicator 22* for further discussion.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, March Current Population Surveys.

**Table 32-2      Percentage of 25- to 34-year-olds in the labor force who were unemployed, by sex and years of school completed: March 1971-96**

March	Male				Female			
	Grades 9-11	High school diploma	Some college	Bachelor's degree or higher	Grades 9-11	High school diploma	Some college	Bachelor's degree or higher
1971	8.3	4.4	4.6	2.8	12.8	6.6	5.9	4.0
1972	7.3	4.1	3.9	2.0	11.4	5.1	5.1	2.8
1973	6.9	3.5	3.7	2.4	8.2	5.6	3.7	2.6
1974	6.3	4.0	3.9	2.4	10.5	5.3	4.2	3.1
1975	16.8	9.0	6.6	2.6	16.8	10.0	6.9	3.5
1976	13.2	7.5	6.1	2.8	13.9	8.8	7.2	3.6
1977	13.9	7.1	5.4	3.0	15.8	8.3	6.8	4.1
1978	10.5	6.0	3.8	2.4	13.8	7.2	4.7	2.9
1979	12.1	5.4	4.5	2.0	13.5	6.2	4.7	3.5
1980	14.2	8.2	6.0	2.4	13.6	7.6	5.9	2.6
1981	16.3	9.5	6.1	2.4	16.5	8.5	5.6	2.9
1982	19.6	13.1	9.2	4.0	17.8	10.6	6.7	3.7
1983	24.8	17.2	11.1	4.3	24.3	11.3	7.8	4.1
1984	19.5	10.6	6.7	3.0	19.2	10.1	6.4	3.1
1985	15.3	9.5	4.9	2.8	18.8	8.6	5.9	2.7
1986	17.6	9.3	5.0	2.1	19.4	8.6	6.1	2.5
1987	16.0	8.2	5.3	3.0	18.0	7.9	5.0	2.5
1988	14.6	7.6	4.2	2.3	15.1	6.1	4.4	2.4
1989	13.1	6.7	3.9	2.3	15.0	5.9	4.4	2.4
1990	14.5	6.3	4.8	2.3	16.6	6.4	4.4	2.1
1991	19.1	9.7	5.6	3.6	17.0	7.1	5.0	2.7
1992	20.3	10.4	7.8	3.7	18.5	9.1	6.0	2.3
1993	19.1	10.5	6.9	3.1	18.3	8.0	5.5	3.4
1994	16.6	8.3	6.4	2.3	17.0	8.0	5.7	3.6
1995	14.3	6.6	4.6	2.8	13.8	6.9	5.4	2.6
1996	14.5	7.6	5.8	2.7	15.4	7.0	4.0	1.7

NOTE: In 1992, the Current Population Survey (CPS) changed the questions used to obtain the educational attainment of respondents. See the supplemental note to *Indicator 22* for further discussion. An unemployed individual is someone who has no job, but who is available for work and has made specific efforts to find employment some time during the prior 4 weeks. Also included are those persons waiting to be recalled to a job from which they had been laid off, and those who are waiting to report to a new job within the next 30 days. The labor force is made up of all persons classified as employed or unemployed. The unemployment rate represents the number of unemployed individuals as a percentage of those in the labor force.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, March Current Population Surveys.

**Table S32**      **Standard errors for the text table in *Indicator 32***

	Male				Female			
	Grades 9–11	High school diploma	Some college	Bachelor's degree or higher	Grades 9–11	High school diploma	Some college	Bachelor's degree or higher
March								
1971	1.1	0.5	1.0	0.8	1.4	0.9	1.6	1.7
1973	1.1	0.5	0.9	0.7	1.5	0.8	1.6	1.5
1975	1.5	0.6	0.9	0.6	1.4	0.8	1.4	1.3
1977	1.4	0.6	0.8	0.5	1.5	0.8	1.3	1.1
1979	1.5	0.5	0.7	0.5	1.6	0.8	1.1	1.1
1981	1.5	0.6	0.7	0.5	1.6	0.8	1.0	1.0
1983	1.7	0.7	0.9	0.6	1.6	0.8	1.1	0.9
1985	1.5	0.6	0.7	0.6	1.7	0.8	1.0	0.9
1987	1.4	0.6	0.7	0.6	1.7	0.7	1.0	0.8
1989	1.5	0.6	0.7	0.5	1.9	0.8	1.0	0.9
1991	1.6	0.6	0.8	0.6	1.7	0.8	1.0	0.8
1992	1.6	0.6	0.8	0.6	1.7	0.8	0.9	0.8
1993	1.6	0.7	0.7	0.6	1.8	0.9	0.9	0.9
1994	1.6	0.7	0.7	0.6	1.8	0.9	0.9	0.9
1995	1.6	0.6	0.7	0.6	1.9	0.9	0.9	0.8
1996	1.5	0.7	0.7	0.6	1.9	0.9	0.9	0.8

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, March Current Population Surveys.

**Table S32-1 Standard errors for table 32-1**

March	Male				Female			
	Grades 9-11	High school diploma	Some college	Bachelor's degree or higher	Grades 9-11	High school diploma	Some college	Bachelor's degree or higher
1971	1.1	0.5	1.0	0.8	1.4	0.9	1.6	1.7
1972	1.1	0.5	0.9	0.7	1.4	0.9	1.6	1.6
1973	1.1	0.5	0.9	0.7	1.5	0.8	1.6	1.5
1974	1.0	0.5	0.8	0.6	1.5	0.8	1.4	1.3
1975	1.5	0.6	0.9	0.6	1.4	0.8	1.4	1.3
1976	1.4	0.6	0.8	0.6	1.5	0.8	1.3	1.2
1977	1.4	0.6	0.8	0.5	1.5	0.8	1.3	1.1
1978	1.4	0.6	0.7	0.5	1.6	0.8	1.2	1.1
1979	1.5	0.5	0.7	0.5	1.6	0.8	1.1	1.1
1980	1.5	0.6	0.7	0.5	1.6	0.8	1.1	1.0
1981	1.5	0.6	0.7	0.5	1.6	0.8	1.0	1.0
1982	1.6	0.7	0.8	0.6	1.7	0.8	1.1	1.0
1983	1.7	0.7	0.9	0.6	1.6	0.8	1.1	0.9
1984	1.6	0.6	0.8	0.6	1.7	0.8	1.0	0.9
1985	1.5	0.6	0.7	0.6	1.7	0.8	1.0	0.9
1986	1.5	0.6	0.7	0.5	1.7	0.8	1.0	0.9
1987	1.4	0.6	0.7	0.6	1.7	0.7	1.0	0.8
1988	1.5	0.6	0.8	0.5	1.9	0.8	1.0	0.9
1989	1.5	0.6	0.7	0.5	1.9	0.8	1.0	0.9
1990	1.4	0.5	0.7	0.6	1.8	0.8	1.0	0.8
1991	1.6	0.6	0.8	0.6	1.7	0.8	1.0	0.8
1992	1.6	0.6	0.8	0.6	1.7	0.8	0.9	0.8
1993	1.6	0.7	0.7	0.6	1.8	0.9	0.9	0.9
1994	1.6	0.7	0.7	0.6	1.8	0.9	0.9	0.9
1995	1.6	0.6	0.7	0.6	1.9	0.9	0.9	0.8
1996	1.5	0.7	0.7	0.6	1.9	0.9	0.9	0.8

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, March Current Population Surveys.

**Table S32-2 Standard errors for table 32-2**

	Male				Female			
	Grades 9-11	High school diploma	Some college	Bachelor's degree or higher	Grades 9-11	High school diploma	Some college	Bachelor's degree or higher
March								
1971	0.9	0.4	0.7	0.5	1.0	0.4	0.8	0.7
1972	0.9	0.4	0.6	0.4	1.0	0.4	0.7	0.5
1973	0.9	0.4	0.5	0.4	0.8	0.4	0.6	0.5
1974	0.9	0.4	0.5	0.4	0.9	0.4	0.6	0.5
1975	1.3	0.6	0.7	0.4	1.1	0.5	0.7	0.5
1976	1.2	0.5	0.6	0.4	1.1	0.5	0.7	0.5
1977	1.2	0.5	0.6	0.4	1.1	0.5	0.7	0.5
1978	1.1	0.5	0.5	0.3	1.1	0.4	0.5	0.4
1979	1.2	0.4	0.5	0.3	1.1	0.4	0.5	0.4
1980	1.2	0.5	0.5	0.3	1.1	0.4	0.5	0.4
1981	1.3	0.5	0.5	0.3	1.2	0.4	0.5	0.4
1982	1.5	0.6	0.7	0.4	1.3	0.5	0.6	0.4
1983	1.6	0.7	0.7	0.4	1.5	0.5	0.6	0.4
1984	1.4	0.5	0.6	0.4	1.4	0.5	0.6	0.4
1985	1.3	0.5	0.5	0.3	1.3	0.4	0.5	0.4
1986	1.3	0.5	0.5	0.3	1.4	0.4	0.5	0.3
1987	1.2	0.5	0.5	0.4	1.3	0.4	0.5	0.3
1988	1.2	0.5	0.5	0.3	1.4	0.4	0.5	0.4
1989	1.2	0.4	0.5	0.3	1.3	0.4	0.5	0.3
1990	1.2	0.4	0.5	0.3	1.3	0.4	0.5	0.3
1991	1.4	0.5	0.6	0.4	1.3	0.4	0.5	0.4
1992	1.4	0.5	0.6	0.4	1.4	0.5	0.5	0.3
1993	1.4	0.6	0.6	0.4	1.4	0.5	0.5	0.4
1994	1.3	0.5	0.5	0.3	1.4	0.5	0.5	0.4
1995	1.3	0.5	0.5	0.4	1.3	0.5	0.5	0.3
1996	1.2	0.5	0.5	0.4	1.4	0.5	0.4	0.3

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, March Current Population Surveys.